

Lt. Governor John Garamendi's Statement on Potential Community College Fee Hikes and the Impact on Job Retraining

SACRAMENTO - Lieutenant Governor John Garamendi, who serves as a University of California regent and a California State University trustee, issued the following statement on potential state budget cuts and fee hikes at California's community colleges and the impact on job retraining.

"Our community colleges throughout the state give students the best opportunity to get an affordable education, workforce preparation and job retraining during hard economic times.

Now the system is being turned on its head. The state Legislative Analyst's office is proposing raising community college tuition by 50 percent by fall 2009. Fees would go from \$20 a unit to \$26 a unit on January 1 then jump to \$30 a unit on July 1. That's in addition to cutting the community college budget by 10 percent. This is simply unacceptable.

Thousands of four -year college students can no longer afford the UC and CSU schools and have switched to two-year community colleges. Californians laid off their jobs have partnered with labor and business groups and are retraining at community colleges in areas like solar. Where will they go now? The cuts and tuition hikes will make it impossible for Californians to stay economically competitive," Lieutenant John Garamendi said. "The Student Senate for California Community Colleges has initiated a letter writing campaign to stop the fee hikes and cuts. I commend them for taking action."